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THE CRAYON.

Volume VII.

JUNE.

Part VI.

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PUBLICATION OFFICE, 55 WALKER STREET.

ART AND ARTISTS IN ANCIENT GREECE.

THE practice of the fine arts in ancient Greece was not limited to the professional artist. Many public schools of design existed at the time of Aristotle in Athens and other cities of Hellas, and they were highly prized; the study of Art was considered indispensable for the development of gifted young men who were candidates for the honors of statesmanship, or were aspirants for other branches of the public service, and still more essential for those engaged in the study of philosophy and belles-lettres. No calling was held to be out of the pale of its benefits. One day one of the common, trading citizens of Athens came to Aristotle and said: "Of what avail is all this concern about Art?" The shrewd reply of the great sage was: "If you had studied Art, you would be better able to protect yourself against fraud and deception in your dealings with those who supply the wants of your fellows." On this occasion Aristotle met his interlocutor on a platform which his mercenary nature was most familiar with; but on another and more dignified occasion he remarked emphatically: "To look on all things exclusively with the grovelling aim of deriving some personal reward, or of satisfying some immediate desire, is unworthy of and little in accord with the character of a high-minded and free-born citizen." Persons of rank resorted in many cases to Art as a means of gaining a livelihood, as, for instance, the son of Perseus, of Macedonia, who, after the Romans had defeated his royal father supported himself as an artist in the Eternal City until he was appointed to an office under the administration.

Socrates, as well as Plato and Aristotle, although fully recognizing the circumstances which preclude men of rank and station from the necessity or the desire of professional labor, urged the cultivation of poetry, rhetoric, sculpture, painting and music as indispensable elements of mental and moral development, the same as the practice of gymnastic and martial exercises was held to be indispensable for that of the physical nature. The tendency in Greece was not to exalt the mere mechanical skill of the artist; not to extol that mere executive facility of the painter or the sculptor, which might be granted to persons of a very inferior and low order of mind; *quality* not *quantity* was the test of artistic aptitude. "The lowest activities are those," says Aristotle, "which absorb most the bodily power." Aristotle applies this emphatically to artists. The moral and intellectual standard of a man was the test of the qualifications of the artist, and not manual dexterity.

"If the man's mind is uninformed and his imagination dormant and his heart narrow, how can he breathe grandeur, vitality and feeling into his works?" The subtle relations of form to feeling were, perhaps, better understood then than now. Artistic work, appreciated as it was in those days, when done by men qualified to give it a public-spirited or elevating signification, was held in comparative contempt, when done only for the gratification of mechanical skill or personal vanity.

The respect for the "God in man" was so great in Greece, none but freemen were allowed to practise Art. Aristotle, *il maestro di color' che sanno* (the master of the learned), as Dante calls him, draws a most beautiful distinction between the mere clod, who works for the sake of living, and the harmonious man, who lives for the sake of working, or between the poor artists who use colors mechanically and the gifted minds who bring to bear upon their art a comprehensive knowledge of nature and of humanity, all the varied attainments of a richly cultivated intellect, and the generous emotions of a warm and stout heart. Galen, following in the same strain of speculation, and enumerating the various sciences which require the higher moral and mental powers in contradistinction to the selfish application of mind and muscle, places with characteristic but excusable egotism his own special department, medicine, at the head of the list, and includes rhetoric, music, sculpture and painting, adding in regard to works in the latter, that "although they are executed by the labor of the hand, they require far higher powers than mere mechanical manipulation." The greatest critic of classical art in modern times, Lessing, the author of the *Laocoön*, expresses this sentiment in a much more beautiful manner, by saying that Raphael would have been a great genius in the art of painting, even if he had come upon the earth without hands. The ideal of Art, as entertained by the sages of Greece, implies the highest degree of moral and mental beauty reflected to the utmost perfection in a plastic, pictorial, poetical and musical form. Hence we find Dædalus, the legendary inventor of Art, worshipped as a deity, and the rank of general conferred upon the artist who executed the Antigone. Hence the first place of honor was assigned in society to Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Pindar and Aristophanes; statues were raised in honor of the great poets and philosophers; Phidias wrote the proud inscription upon his Olympian Jupiter: "I am the work of Phidias of the Athenians, the son of Charmidas;" an inscription which the people sanctioned by their enthusiastic admiration of the work of his genius.

Almost divine honors were paid in many instances to deceased artists. A statue of Chirisophus, who had executed an Apollo for the citizens of Tegea was placed side by side with that monument; the statues of Strato and Xenophilus were placed near those of Æsculapius and Hygeia, which they had executed at Argos, and the portrait of Alcámenes, the sculptor and pupil of Phidias was placed on the gable of the temple of Eleusis. Offences against artists were deemed almost as criminal as outrages against the gods, and Pausanias mentions the instance of an oracle which imposed penitence upon the city of Sikyon for a wrong perpetrated upon an artist by one of its inhabitants. Many cities vied for the honor of having given birth to great artists with almost as much eagerness as in the case of Homer. They were made honorary citizens in any place where they resided for any length of time. Their arrival in one or the other city became the signal of a popular ovation, and new works of art excited so much attention that allusions to them in the plays of Aristophanes found immediate response in the applause of the audiences.

The competition between artists produced frequently not a little excitement. Agoracritus, the favorite pupil of Phidias, and Alcámenes, another pupil of the same master, both executed a Venus for the citizens of Athens, but the prize being awarded to the latter, who was a native of the city, the former attributed the preference to prejudice on account of his belonging to a different part of the country (the island of Paros). Converting his Venus, therefore, into a Nemesis, he presented it to the Rhamnusians for the temple of that goddess, under the condition that it should never be removed to Athens. A still more excessive pride was that of the painter Zeuxis, who gave many of his works away, because the prices offered to him were not sufficiently high. But it should be added, that he happened to be a man of wealth. The value which the Grecians placed upon their works of art was manifested with particular force by the citizens of Knidos, who, in times of adversity, refused to part with the Venus of Praxiteles, although Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, offered to pay their immense national debt if they would let him have it. Pliny well remarks, that Praxiteles immortalizes Knidos by his statue, and Lucian speaks of it with unbounded admiration. When Veres, the notorious robber of works of art, asserted that he had acquired them honestly, Cicero's reply was: "Never have the citizens of Greece parted with their artistic treasures for money. They clung to them with the greatest adoration. They considered it the height of degradation, to sell at any price the works which they had inherited from their ancestors; and wise considerations of policy have induced the Roman government to leave the vanquished nations in possession of these objects of their love and enthusiasm, as a consolation for the loss of their liberty."

(*oblectamenta et solatia servitutis*). Demetrius, while before the walls of Rhodus, hesitated to bombard the city because the fire would destroy one of the best paintings by Protogenes. "I would rather burn the pictures of my father," exclaimed the king, "than injure such a remarkable work of art!" The artist himself was quietly at work upon his famous picture of a satyr, in his villa near the besieged city, and Demetrius, on hearing of the proximity of his residence, invited him to his camp, and expressed his surprise at seeing him engaged on his work in the midst of the excitement of the battle. "I knew," replied Protogenes, "that you made war against the Rhodians, and not against Art." Cicero, relating another striking instance of the appreciation of Art, in connection with the citizens of Crotona and Zeuxis, who was commissioned by them to furnish paintings for their temple of Juno, and who had a great reputation for his skill in painting female figures, says that he proposed to add to his other pictures, one representing the highest ideal of womanly beauty in a portrait of Helena. To accomplish his object, he wished to contemplate the most beautiful girls of the city, and to enable him to do so, the authorities, after holding a council on the subject, caused the maidens of Crotona to assemble in public, and the artist selected five of them, who, for all times, have become celebrated as the models of beauty.

Phidias and other artists were called *demiurgi*, a term signifying persons whose works promote the beautiful, the good and the useful among the people (*δemos*). Even the All-omnipotent, the creator of the universe, or of the cosmos, was called by the philosophers the *δημιουργός τοῦ κόσμου*. In Sparta and other states the chief government officer was designated by the same appellation. But many tradesmen and mechanics engaged in useful labors were also called *demiurgi*. This word had a wide significance and took its meaning from the character and genius of the individual to whom it was applied. The term *χειρῶναξ* (*cheironax*) referred more literally to those engaged in handicraft; both expressions were rather indiscriminately used, but *demiurgi* the more generally. In antiquity, when many mechanics were engaged in the elaboration of works of art, the union between them and the artist was intimate; the various *demiurgi*, the carpenters, potters or gilders, who were employed on the works of Phidias, had little thought of presuming upon intellectual equality with the great master, as little as he took umbrage at sharing in the same appellation. The same sort of *esprit de corps* between artists and mechanics existed toward the close of the middle ages at the dawn of Italian art, when the painter was called "master," his pupils "apprentices," and his *atelier* a "workshop." Raphael shared the title of master with all competent mechanics; and the workshop where Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo executed their immortal

works, was called *bottega*, which was also the name of the workshop of their carpenters, carvers, turners and gilders. The great Albrecht Durer was a goldsmith as well as Benvenuto Cellini, and Peter Vischer represented himself among the twelve apostles on his tomb of St. Sebaldus in the garb of a common master-mechanic. It was reserved for a later and more degenerate period of Art to find fault with the democratic usages of antiquity and of the great Italian Art eras. Lanzi, the Art historian of the 18th century, reflects most painfully this falling off from the high-minded standard of former times, by characterizing the lingering remains of the levelling system between artist and mechanic as traces of a still barbarous age (*rozzo secolo*), and by pointing triumphantly to the progress of artistic culture as shown in the fact that artists are no longer called by the plebeian name of "masters," but by the patrician title of "professors;" and that the atelier is no longer referred to under the vulgar name of "workshop," but under the fashionable designation of "studio." Poor Lanzi! He was little aware that his naïve utterance of eulogiums upon the increasing culture of Art would be considered as infallible evidence of its increasing degeneracy. It should be borne in mind, that in all flourishing Art periods, and above all in Greece, the worship of the beautiful derived its origin and strength from the purest sentiment of the community, which gave birth to an intuitive tendency to award honors where honor was due, whether to the humble but skillful and conscientious mechanic, or to the lofty and princely artist of genius. No poet has rendered so much homage to mechanics as Homer. He mentions even the name of the skillful goldsmith who gilded the horns of the sacred animal for King Nestor, as well as that of the admirable workman in leather, who prepared the great shield of Ajax. Ulysses performed carpenter work in manufacturing his bed; Penelope, Nausikaa and other women of rank are mentioned as accomplished weavers. Gods and goddesses are the patron saints of mechanics, Hephæstos of smiths, Pallas of weavers and carpenters, Prometheus of the guilds of potters, etc. History informs us that mechanics coöperated in Greece so intelligently with the artists that their calling was elevated, and their labor refined by a nobler sense of the beautiful, while the genius of the artists was expanded, and their knowledge of technicalities extended by the close connection with their lowly, but instructive fellow-laborers.

Spirited repartees have come down to us. Zeuxis interrupted the nonsense which one of his princely patrons was uttering about Art, by saying to him: "See how you are laughed at by my workmen?" Apelles told a similar truth to the great Alexander, and another artist advised the imperial dilettanti Hadrian to paint his cucumbers, "for of my art you understand nothing." As further evidence of capacity, Plato says

of Damon, the musical artist, that he concealed great powers of philosophic and statesmanlike thought under the modest garb of music. Socrates was the son of a sculptor, practised for some time the art of his father, and loved to commune with artists and mechanics. The illustrious Phidias was the friend and confidant of Pericles; and a man of the most many-sided culture. Polyctetes, Apelles, Parrhasius, the distinguished painter of Ephesus, upon whom the Athenians conferred the honorary citizenship of Athens; Asclepiodorus, Euphranor, who was both painter and sculptor, and whom Quintilian compares with Cicero, on account of his high attainments; Xenocrates, a remarkably productive sculptor from the school of Lysippus; Melanthius, Hermogenes, the philosopher and painter against whom Tertullian wrote, and many others, were eminent both as writers on Art and as artists. Menæchmus, the sculptor, wrote works on his art, beside a historical work on Alexander the Great. Pamphilus, the teacher of Apelles, was versed in all sciences, particularly in mathematics. His motto was: "No one can be an artist without possessing a thorough knowledge of mathematics." The same artist founded a public free academy of design in his native town. Polyidus, the painter, was also eminent as a poet. Gitiadas, one of the earliest and most celebrated artists of Lacedæmon, wrote hymns in honor of the goddess Pallas, in whose honor he built a temple and executed a monument. Pasiteles, the contemporary of Pompey, wrote a book on the most famous works of art which then existed in the world. The victor of the Macedonian Perseus, the Roman Æmilius Paulus, requested the Athenians to recommend him a philosopher, as preceptor of his children, and a painter who could illustrate his triumphs. They sent him Metrodorus, as a man competent to fill both offices, and Pliny tells us, that Paulus expressed the utmost admiration of him in the two capacities. The painter Diognetus instructed not only Marcus Aurelius in his art, but his imperial pupil admitted that he was indebted to him for the greater part of his general culture. Indeed, the greater portion of about five hundred Grecian artists, whose names have been preserved, were men of the highest accomplishments, and not a few might have gained high honors as statesmen, sages and poets, if they had devoted themselves exclusively to any of these professions.

Although prejudice existed in the high circles of Athens against those artists who worked for the exclusive purpose of making money, the receipt of a pecuniary remuneration was not considered ignoble, if the recipient was an artist of high mind and genius. Only a few artists are mentioned who were positively poor. The majority were profitably employed by the government, and by many public bodies and private individuals, including many poets and philosophers, as well as by patrons in foreign countries. They were generally in comfortable

circumstances, and not an inconsiderable number were distinguished for great wealth and great liberality in using it. The social position of the Grecian artists was thus brilliant in the fullest sense of the word. They were the mental peers of statesmen, the moral equals of sages, the friends of the people, courtiers by their elegance, natural republicans by their sturdy independence, the enthusiastic worshippers of the holy, true and beautiful in the religion and politics of their country. The only two eminent men who endeavored to disparage the high social position of the Grecian artists are Plutarch and Seneca. The one, however, was a Greek with Roman proclivities, and the other was the teacher of Nero!

In the works of Aristotle we find the noblest appreciation of Grecian artists, and in his definition of Art, we find a lofty and true perception of its purpose; he considered it as the embodiment of the most exquisite loveliness and the highest moral beauty, and the promoter of the happiness of humanity. The thoughts of the Greek sage are in beautiful harmony with those of the poet Schiller, who addresses to mankind the following lines:

Im Fleiss kann dich die Biene meistern,
In der geschicklichkeit ein Wurm dein Lehrer sein,
Dein Wissen theilest du mit vorgezogenen Geistern,
Die Kunst, o Mensch, hast Du allein!

A PURE taste is of the first order of national benefits; it is a talisman which adorns everything that it touches, and which touches everything within the magic circle of its sway; there is nothing too high for its influence, or too low for its attention; and while it mounts on wings of fire with the poet and the painter, to the highest heaven of invention, it descends with humble diligence to the aid of the mechanic at the anvil and the loom. The ancients, sensible of its importance, neglected no means of cherishing those pursuits, through which only is it effectually to be gained. . . . They cultivated the utilities of life in its ornaments, and took the most certain mode of supplying the circulation of improvement by invigorating the source from which it flowed. Thus enlightened in their views, they were rewarded in a degree proportioned to the wisdom which governed them. A peculiar character of elegance and propriety pervaded the whole circle of their arts, which made even trifles interesting: and so little have the moderns to pride themselves on their advancement in these respects, that to have successfully imitated their productions, is the boast of our most ingenious manufactures.—*M. A. Shee.*

"THE whalers," says Turner, "have a superstition that when they are going to harpoon a whale, it is their duty to put their best jackets on." A good hint for the critic when he is going to strike a heavy fish.

The Fejée Islanders put charges into their guns according to the size of the person they intend to shoot at. A bad rule enough for musquetry, but not for criticism.—*Boyes.*

THERE are some men who seem to exert all their bodily powers in violating the law, and all their mental ones in eluding it.—*Boyes.*

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DANTE AND MILTON.

BY MRS. E. VALE SMITH.

I.

DANTE ALIGHIERI and John Milton stand preëminently forward as the representative poets of their respective eras. The one by his nativity, education, habits and general spirit a medieval Italian, and at the same time a far seeing philosopher, and an intellectual thorn in the side of the dominant hierarchy of his age. The other, Saxon in his mental energy, English in his self-complacency, Protestant to the inner core of his nature as well as in his faith, and belonging in sympathy and fact to the latter-day dawn of philosophy and science. Representative men they both were, though they represented but a comparatively small portion of the people for whom they spoke. Yet, had we no other literary types of southern Europe and the British Isles, than the writings of these two men, we could not mistake the inherent differences of their nationalities. Had we no other interpreters of the Christian faith, there is little, either in doctrine or practice, of which we need be ignorant, if Dante and Milton are diligently studied.

All human vices, passions and virtues, are vividly described, and meet with their corresponding reward in the pages of the Catholic Dante—every crime and every beneficence is there made an unmistakable portrait, and shrined in a unique and unequalled setting: while his modern rival ransacks earth, air and heaven to compass the destiny of a single human pair. As poets only, passion, multiplicity and variety are Dante's characteristics, a severe and massive unity is Milton's.

In a purely ecclesiastical view, the religion of Romanism may correctly be called the religion of details—the reformed religion that of principles. Not that principle is absent from the former, or that conventionalisms were, even in Milton's age, absent from the latter; but, in the first, observance overshadows doctrine; in the latter, doctrine subordinates observance. No one can examine the two systems, as taught in their respective schools, without perceiving the immense relative importance which the Romanist places upon what the Protestant chooses to consider as indifferent personal actions; and especially upon the rigid performance of ecclesiastical rules and ordinances; hence we should, *a priori*, conclude, that a Catholic poet of the middle ages, through force of education, if for no other reason, would tend to ingenuity in following up and illustrating those fine theological niceties of the prevalent schoolmen increasing and dilating upon them, multiplying and exaggerating them—if exaggeration were possible. We should also, on similar grounds, expect to see a very different product in the works of a Cromwellian Independent. A tendency rather to grasp at main truths and central ideas; holding with an iron grip whatever was seized upon, in its solidity and entirety, but not